

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAPE T 00533 121758Z
ACTION SS-25

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O 121720Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 5943
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAPE TOWN 0533

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, SF, WA, US, UN, FR, GW, UK, CA
SUBJ: CONVERSATION WITH FONMIN BOTHA ON FIVE-
POWER DEMARCHE

REF: CAPE TOWN 0521

1. FONMIN BOTHA ASKED ME TO COME TO HIS OFFICE THIS
AFTERNOON. HE RECEIVED ME ALONE. THERE FOLLOW THE
ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF OUR ONE-HOUR MEETING.

2. HE OPENED THE CONVERSATION BY EXPRESSING CONCERN
OVER THE VICIOUS CAMPAIGN BEING ORGANIZED AGAINST HIM
BY THE HNP IN WESTDENE. BY SKILLFULLY DEvised POSTERS
AND PAMPHLETS REPRODUCING STATEMENTS MADE WHILE HE WAS
IN THE US, THEY ARE TRYING TO CONVEY THE IMPRESSION
THAT A VOTE FOR PIK BOTHA IS A VOTE FOR A BLACK FUTURE
IN SOUTH AFRICA. HE COMPLAINED ABOUT THE IMPOSSIBILITY
OF TRYING TO RUN A POLITICAL CAMPAIGN AT LONG DISTANCE
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WHILE SERVING AS FOREIGN MINISTER IN SO CRITICALLY
ACTIVE A MOMENT.

3. BOTHA NEXT TURNED TO THE 5-POWER DEMARCHE. HE SAID
THAT THE PM'S RESPONSE WAS POSITIVE AND THE WAY WAS NOW
OPEN FOR TALKS. SPEED IS OF THE ESSENCE. THE PM HAD ASKED
HIM THIS MORNING WHETHER HE HAD RECEIVED ANY REACTION

BACK FROM THE THURSDAY MEETING AND HOW SOON THE TALKS COULD COMMENCE. SPEAKING PERSONALLY, BOTHA SAID THAT THE TURNHALLE HAS A MOMENTUM WHICH INCREASINGLY COMPLICATES SAG DEALING WITH WHITES AS WELL AS BLACKS AND BROWNS. THERE IS NO TIME TO LOSE. LOOKING TO THE TALKS HE SAID HE WANTED TO MAKE TWO TACTICAL SUGGESTIONS. OUR AIDE MEMOIRE FOCUSSED PRIMARILY ON THE TOUGH ISSUES: SWAPO PARTICIPATION, UN INVOLVEMENT AND TESTING OF PUBLIC OPINION. THERE WAS NO RECOGNITION OF ELEMENTS OF RESOLUTION 385 ON WHICH THE SAG HAD MADE PROGRESS. THIS PRODUCES A BAD REACTION HERE AND IN WINDHOEK. HE URGED THAT IN PREPARATION OF THE AGENDA FOR THE TALKS ALL THE ELEMENTS OF RESOLUTION 385 BE LISTED: UNITARY STATE, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT, FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT, END OF APARTHEID, ETC., AS WELL AS THE "THREE TOUGHIES." IN THIS WAY THERE CAN BE A MORE BALANCED CONSIDERATION OF ISSUES. IF AGREEMENT CAN BE REACHED, THEN THE LIST OF POINTS WILL HAVE A BETTER IMPACT BACK HERE. HE SAID 5 POWERS MUST KEEP IN MIND IN HANDLING THIS ISSUE THAT PM HAS TOUGH JOB AND HE MUST BE HELPED INSTEAD OF HINDERED IN HANDLING THE SITUATION WITH THE TURNHALLE DELEGATES.

4. THE OTHER SUGGESTION WAS THAT THE FIVE AMBASSADORS MET WITH TURNHALLE REPRESENTATIVES TO REVIEW WITH THEM THE POINTS MADE TO THE PM IN THE AIDE MEMOIRE. HE SAID HE COULD ARRANGE IT AND WOULD BE PRESENT.

5. I RESPONDED TO BOTHA THAT WE ALSO SHARE A SENSE OF URGENCY. I REPEATED WHAT I TOLD THE PM LAST
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THURSDAY ABOUT THE LEVEL, TIME AND PLACE, NOTING THAT WE WOULD LET HIM KNOW AS SOON AS WE RECEIVED INSTRUCTIONS. WITH REGARD TO HIS TACTICAL SUGGESTIONS, I SAID THAT I WOULD PASS THESE ALONG TO WASHINGTON. I THEN ASKED HIM WHETHER HE COULD GIVE ME ANY IDEA HOW HIS GOVERNMENT WAS ADDRESSING THE "THREE TOUGHIES" SINCE THESE WERE THE KEY TO INTERNATIONAL ACCEPTANCE. HE RESPONDED THAT HE COULD NOT DO SO AT THIS STAGE. THIS WOULD HAVE TO AWAIT THE DISCUSSIONS. I WENT ON TO ASK HIM WHETHER IN VIEW OF THE PENDING DISCUSSIONS IT WAS WISE TO CONTINUE WITH THE WHITE REFERENDUM PROJECTED FOR MAY 17. HE SAID HE WAS PERSONALLY AGAINST THE REFERENDUM UNTIL HE GOT BACK TO SOUTH AFRICA. ONCE HE DISCUSSED IT WITH HIS FRIENDS HERE, HE SAW THE IMPORTANCE OF GOING AHEAD AS A MEANS OF SAFEGUARDING THE POSITION OF PERSONS LIKE DIRK MUDGE WHO ARE ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL TO A REASONABLE SETTLEMENT. SUCH PERSONS NEED THAT "PROTECTION" SO THAT IT CANNOT BE SAID LATER THAT ACTION WAS TAKEN WITHOUT CONSULTATION. BOTHA

PREFERRED TO HAVE THE REFERENDUM POSTPONED AND INCORPORATE IT IN SOME LATER, MORE GENERAL TESTING OF PUBLIC OPINION, BUT HE ACCEPTED THE FACT THAT IT WAS BEST TO LET IT PROCEED.

6. COMMENT: IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO BE ABLE TO CONVEY TO FONMIN DURING COURSE OF THIS WEEK SOMETHING ABOUT DATE, VENUE AND LEVEL. REGARDING THE TACTICAL SUGGESTIONS MADE BY BOTHA, I RECOMMEND THAT THE AGENDA FOR THE TALKS BE CONSTRUCTED AS HE SUGGESTS SO THAT IMPRESSION IS CONVEYED THAT LIMITED TURNHALLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS NOT BEING IGNORED. I SURMISE THAT BOTHA WANTS THIS TO SHOW TO HIS PM AND TURNHALLE DELEGATES THAT THERE IS SOME RECOGNITION OF WHAT THEY HAVE DONE. PSYCHOLOGICALLY THIS IS IMPORTANT. I SEE NO NEED FOR THE FIVE AMBASSADORS TO MEET WITH TURNHALLE DELEGATES. THE SAG CAN DO THIS. IT WOULD GIVE IMPRESSION OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH TURNHALLE WHICH WE WANT
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TO AVOID. BOWDLER

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Message Attributes

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